WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A support fee setting method comprising the steps of:

    storing a user name and a grade for service in a one-to-one correspondence;

5   obtaining points derived from a job responding to an inquiry from a user from a job-to-point conversion table;

    obtaining the grade of the user by referring to a user information database that has stored the user name and the grade for service for the user; and

10 setting a support fee based on the grade of the user, the points derived, and an actual cost for a responding activity to the inquiry from the user.

2. The support fee setting method according to claim 1,
15 wherein:

    the points derived are converted to an amount according to the grade of the user by using a point conversion table, in which an amount is set for each grade; and

    the support fee is computed as a total amount and a
20 total of actual costs for the responding activity to the inquiry of the user.

3. The support fee setting method according to claim 1, wherein:

25 the points derived and the actual cost are stored in

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a history information database in correspondence with the user name; and

the points of the user and actual cost are obtained by referring to said history information database.

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4. The support fee setting method according to claim 2, wherein:

the points derived and the actual cost are stored in a history information database in correspondence with the

10 user name; and

the points of the user and actual cost are obtained by referring to said history information database.

5. The support fee setting method according to claim 1,

15 wherein:

the total amount is a total of the amounts for a predetermined period;

a grade shifting value according to an aggregate of total amount is obtained by using a grade conversion table,

20 in which an amount and a corresponding shift in grade are stored; and

the grade of the user in the user information database is updated based on the grade shifting value.

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6. The support fee setting method according to claim 2, wherein:

the total amount is a total of the amounts for a predetermined period;

a grade shifting value according to an aggregate of total amount is obtained by using a grade conversion table, in which an amount and a corresponding shift in grade are stored; and

the grade of the user in the user information database is updated based on the grade shifting value.

7. The support fee setting method according to claim 3, wherein:

the total amount is a total of the amounts for a predetermined period;

a grade shifting value according to an aggregate of total amount is obtained by using a grade conversion table, in which an amount and a corresponding shift in grade are stored; and

the grade of the user in the user information database is updated based on the grade shifting value.

8. A support fee setting apparatus comprising:

a user information database which stores a user name and a grade for service in a one-to-one correspondence;

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a history information database which stores actual

cost and points derived from a responding activity to an

inquiry from a user in correspondence with each user name;

and

5   an evaluating section for setting a support fee based

on the points derived and actual cost.

9.   A computer readable medium storing instructions for

causing a computer to perform the steps of:

10   storing a user name and a grade for service in a

one-to-one correspondence;

obtaining points derived from a job responding to an

inquiry from a user from a job-to-point conversion table;

obtaining the grade of the user by referring to a user

15   information database that has stored the user name and the

grade for service for the user; and

setting a support fee based on the grade of the user,

the points derived, and an actual cost for a responding

activity to the inquiry from the user.

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10.   A computer program for causing the computer to perform

the steps of:

storing a user name and a grade for service in a

one-to-one correspondence;

25   obtaining points derived from a job responding to an

inquiry from a user from a job-to-point conversion table;

obtaining the grade of the user by referring to a user information database that has stored the user name and the grade for service for the user; and

5   setting a support fee based on the grade of the user, the points derived, and an actual cost for a responding activity to the inquiry from the user.